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H WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS H
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GERMAN INDIAN MISSIONS IN MICHIGAN

By Dr. W. W. Florer
Author and lecturer, formerly on the staff of the University of Michigan German Department

Reverend Friedrich Schmid prepared several young men for missionary work, at his country pastoral home in Scio Township, Washtenaw County, where he lived for many years. These activities of his had far-reaching influence.

Among these young students was Candidate J. J. F. Auch, who had traveled extensively in the Saginaw River area. Pastor Schmid had also made at least one trip to that neighborhood. They knew that several Indian villages were situated near Sebewaing, Michigan.

On March 24, 1842, at the instigation of Schmid and Auch, the Congregation of the "Second German Society," as it was called at that time, decided to send a missionary to Sebewaing. They sent the young Candidate J. J. F. Auch, to undertake this Indian Mission work. Auch left for this work either in the summer of 1842 or the spring of 1843; at least we know he had been there several months before George W. Hallstaedt took over one of the Schmid congregations in Monroe, in 1844.

In the meantime, the Reverend Wilhelm Loehe of Bavaria had become interested in missionary work in North America, especially among the Indians. He started a journal called "Kirchliche Mitteilungen aus und über Nord-Amerika" (Church Reports from and about North America), in 1843. The object of this journal was to arouse interest for the Indian missions in the United States. He had even thought of sending a colony of settlers instead of a single mission-

History of Chodzon
By Miss Nina Bella Wheeler

Formal Article at
The Journal, 1892, Meeting

ary. On reading about the Sebewaing Mission, Loehe decided definitely to carry out his mission colony plan.

A correspondence took place between Schmid and Hallstaedt. Loehe requested them to select a site in Michigan. Evidently Loehe knew little about the undeveloped condition of the young state of Michigan.

Auch was requested to select a site for the small mission colony. Knowing that area well, Auch selected a site on the Cass River a few miles from the village of Tuscola. Thus Frankenmuth was started in 1845. Several young couples under the leadership of the Rev. Friedrich H. Craemer departed from Bavaria and finally arrived in Monroe. Here they were met by Schmid and Hallstaedt. They journeyed by boat to the Lower Saginaw, where they were met by Auch and conducted first to Saginaw city, eventually to Frankenmuth.

Loehe's ideal dream of a mission colony did not work out in practice. The Leipzig Mission House finally sent over Ernst Baurlein in 1847, who decided to start his missionary work at a Pine River Indian settlement just north of St. Louis, Michigan. Baurlein labored among the Indians for several years. He even published a catechism and confirmation book in Detroit in the Indian language. Baurlein and Craemer conducted the schools in the English language. Baurlein, however, conducted church services in the Chippewa language.

During his residence in the Pine River village, Baurlein made copious notes about the life and customs of the Indians of the Saginaw area, and finally published his observations in 1888 in a book called "Im Urwald bei den roten Indianern" (In the Virgin Forest Among the Red Indians). This book was sold by the thousands in Germany and by the hundreds in the United States. A short version of this important work will furnish the principal chapters of a book the writer is about to send to press.

In the meantime, Frankenmuth had grown so much and the work among the Indians had so diminished that Loehe's idea of a mission colony had ceased to exist. Likewise, the Sebewaing station, which was active for so many years, was also given up following a settlement of Swabian colonists from the Scio congregation. Auch finally was called to act as Pastor of the Sebewaing congregation, which has just now celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. The Pine River station flourished until Baurlein was recalled and sent to India, after which it too gradually faded away.

In a very real sense, a new chapter in the development of the Saginaw area and of the young state of Michigan was the direct result of that March meeting of 1842, in the Swabian colony of Washtenaw County, on Scio Church Road just west of Ann Arbor.

Ann Arbor, Michigan
December 16, 1952

PERSONAL EXHIBITS AT THE JANUARY 28, 1953, MEETING.

The announcements of this meeting distributed to members of the Washtenaw Historical Society requested members to bring "some historic object or family relic and tell its history." The following list of the exhibits presented for the interest of those present has been supplied by Mrs. I. Wm. Groomes, Secretary.

Mrs. L. A. Catey exhibited a small stone sun dial made for her grandmother which dated back to 1821.

Mr. Octave Gardner told the story of copper from the Calumet & Hecla mine, and exhibited samples of copper deposits.

Mrs. Walter Staebler had a box of letters dating back to 1825 from Mich. settlers to relatives in N. Y. State, telling all about life in those early days.

Mr. Staebler showed his grandfather's pass port, bearing the date 1831 (when he came from Germany).

Mrs. Collins of Saline had a program of the inauguration of Benj. Harrison in 1889 - a guide book from the Centennial Exposition - silk woven railroad tickets, and a book on embroidery which belonged to her grandmother.

Mr. Taylor told the story of a flag from the "Hartford" (now at Annapolis) which was presented to his grandfather's company after the battle of New Orleans in 1862 and showed a picture of a painting of the flag.

Prof. Lorch submitted a silhouette (the first stage of reproductions before the day of the camera) a daguerrotype (the next development) and a set of drinking glasses in a leather case.

Mrs. Jennie Lohmiller brought a bound volume of the magazine "A lady's amourette" dated 1841, and a copy of the Howell Democrat newspaper, telling of the assassination of President Lincoln.

Mrs. Alta Graves told the story of the substitution of her grandfather for a wealthy man who didn't want to go to war in 1861 and a gift of 20 $20 gold pieces to her grandmother by an unknown donor.

Miss Pansy Johnson showed a Peterson's magazine (successor to the Godey book) dated 1869.

Mrs. Chas. Chamberlain of Pinckney had a lovely white knitted counterpane made by an "Ann" after whom Ann Arbor was named, as the story goes.

Mrs. Groomes had a small brass lamp (which antedated kerosene oil) which burned fat, and the candle snuffer to trim the rag wick.

HISTORY OF CHELSEA
By Miss Nina Belle Wurster

This material on the history of Chelsea has been compiled from facts I have heard my grandparents, parents, relatives, and friends tell many times; from scrap books owned by my family, Mrs. E. R. Dancer, Miss Jessie Everett, and Miss Lillie Wackenhut; a paper written in 1912 by Mrs. George Webster on "Early Days in Chelsea;" and also two published histories of Washtenaw County: 1881 and 1906.

Chelsea, when platted in 1850, was noted for its hills and ravines. We who live here now can hardly see how the changes took place. Main Street was a rugged hillside, a deep ravine crossing it at about the Freeman Block. The south side of Park Street was a terrace, the north side a steep pitch which had to have made ground in order to support buildings.

Between the McKune house and Palmer's garage was the most difficult sand hill anywhere around for teamsters. In fact, men who drove to Flint for lumber stated that the Main Street hill, from north of the railroad to Orchard Street, was the steepest grade they had to make in the entire journey of three days. Teamsters often had to unload half of their load, drive to the top of the hill, unload, go back down, load the other half, drive back up, put on the first half of their load, and go on their way.

Not all who wished to build in the village could build on the hill, consequently some had to build in the hollows. Where some of our handsomest residences now stand were unsightly building spots 95 years ago. There was a pond hole where the brick residence now stands on the NE corner of Middle and East Streets. A huckleberry marsh and skating pond were filled in for the residences of the Charles Meservas and the Norman Perkins. The level of land on Middle Street east from Main Street to the Broesamle residence, and on north to the railroad, was cut down at least ten feet, and the strip of land south from Middle Street to Park Street was filled in for ten feet.

It has been said that the reason our streets are narrow is that the town Elisha Congdon came from had very narrow streets, and naturally he thought it proper for the west to copy the east in laying out towns.

The first building erected in the village was the store of Elisha Congdon, built in the summer of 1849 where the Buick garage now stands. This building was eventually moved to the corner of East and Jackson Streets, and is now the two-family home owned and occupied by Mrs. Mary Eder. The second business building was a brick blacksmith shop on the east side of Main Street north of the railroad. This was built by C. H. Wines for Aaron Durand and Newton Robinson. In the same year Asel Harris built a hotel and saloon on the company's land just south of the depot.

In 1851, J. C. Winans moved from Sylvan to Chelsea. He built a barn on the property where the postoffice now stands, and his family lived in the barn until the house was completed. This house, moved to the lot directly west and remodeled, is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Weinberg. The same year Mr. Winans built a general store which he carried on for 19 years.

Other houses were built by D. C. Fenn, Dr. Bancroft, and Asa Blackney. J. L. Harlow erected a wagon shop on ground now occupied by the Vogel & Wurster Dry Goods store. S. D. Breed built a dwelling on the corner of Main and Middle Streets, now the site of Walter Kantlehner's store; he made boots and shoes in his home. Mr. Harlow built a small home, later purchased by George Wackenhut, now enlarged and occupied by Miss Lillie Wackenhut.

In the spring of 1852, H. M. Boyd built a wagon shop north of the railroad. This was later bought by J. B. Beissel and used as a cooper shop. This building is still standing, north of the Chelsea Elevator's office building. This same spring, Jared Hatch, the great great grandfather of the writer, built a house on Railroad Street on the site now occupied by the stone building of the Federal Screw Company. Eventually Mr. Hatch gave this place to his granddaughter, Mrs. George Crowell, for taking care of him.

By the close of 1852 there were, on the west side of Main Street, one wagon shop, one store, one hotel, one saloon, one tailor shop, one blacksmith shop, and seven dwellings. On the east side there were one blacksmith shop, one store, one shoe shop, and 10 dwellings. The population of the village at that date totalled about 62, with perhaps a dozen transients.

After the winter of 1853, Chelsea grew by leaps and bounds. That year C. H. Kempf opened a hardware store and tin shop on the ground where the Sylvan Hotel is located. Thomas Godfrey built the Godfrey House. John H. Clark erected the first brick store. A. M. Spaulding built a general store, double size. These first store buildings were of wood, built low with wooden awnings across the front. These awnings were a protection from sun and storm. In front of the stores were wooden sidewalks. As one walked down Main Street from Middle Street on the east side the road sloped towards the north, and near the end of the block were 17 steps down to the railroad right of way. When farmers came to town and wanted to trade they had to climb 10 steps from the street to the walk, and on the west side it was necessary to go down about that many steps to enter the business places.

When Curran White came from Lima Township, in 1855, the population was 200. Mr. White built a residence on East Middle Street, better known as the Negus house, now owned by Lloyd Heydlauff. In the 60's Mr. White and Mr. Negus, his son-in-law, built a planing mill and cider mill on Madison Street, just north of Harrison, which they ran for many years until it was destroyed by fire.

The first Elisha Congdon addition to the village was platted on July 6, 1855. The land our house stands on was at once deeded to DeWitt C. Hurd, and later the same year to George F. Davison. Our present house was built about 1857. The first house occupied by Elisha Congdon proved too small for his large family, and the house was moved to the site of the Freeman Block, later to its present site on South Main. His next house was burned about 1860; he then built the one now known as the McKune house.

In the fall of 1869 Chelsea celebrated the opening of Orchard Street. The celebration took place in the orchard where Ruth Bacon Fordyce's home now stands. This was an all-day affair, closing with

fireworks and later dancing in the Congdon house, now the McKune house. The first Orchard Street house was built by Henry Speer.

In April, 1870, a disastrous fire swept away the entire row of buildings on the west side of Main Street between Middle Street and the railroad. All the village records were burned at this time. The stores when rebuilt were made of brick. In 1871 the James Hudler store in the middle of the block was burned, but owing to the improved construction of the new buildings, only that one was destroyed. In November, 1876, the east side of Main Street from Middle Street to the Chelsea House was burned, and that side also was soon rebuilt of brick

During one of these two disastrous fires, Mr. Klein, who owned a saloon, refused to open it up so the fire fighters could refresh themselves. A group of men took the matter in their own hands, borrowed the drayman's horses, hitched them to the doors of the saloon, started the horses, and -- the doors were in the street.

In 1872, the H. S. Holmes store was started. In 1892, Mr. Holmes took in three partners and it was called the H. S. Holmes Mercantile Company. In 1914, Mr. Vogel and my father being the sole owners, the name was changed to Vogel & Wurster. This is the oldest department store in the county today.

Frank P. Glazier, son of George P. Glazier, started the Glazier Stove Works in 1891 and manufactured oil heating and cooking stoves. As the business grew it was necessary to enlarge the factory. The office building and a store used for mounting and storing of the stoves were in the buildings on the sites of the present Baxter and Alstaeter stores. On Sunday afternoon, February 18, 1894, a fire started in the Glazier office building, destroyed the two buildings occupied by the Stove Co., the Congregational Church and parsonage. In 1895, the Glazier Stove Co. bought the property on Railroad Street from Main Street east. The Harrington and Hawley houses were torn down, the Crowell house was moved to its present site on Congdon St. (now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Hennon), the Johnson house was moved to the corner of West Middle and Wilkinson Streets, later partially burned and torn down. After a number of years the Richards home, site of the present Spring Plant, was purchased by Dr. George Palmer and John Kalmbach and moved to the corner of Madison and Park Streets. This house burned several years ago.

In the 1880's, Jabez Bacon built a roller-skating rink on East Middle Street, which after a short time was used for storage. Later Mr. Bacon remodeled the building into a residence, now the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schneider.

Leander Tichenor made boots and shoes when he first came to Chelsea. Later, when he lived in the house north of the Catholic Church now owned by Mr. Howard Canfield, he made very fine row-boats in a shop at the rear of his home. The boats were made of canvas stretched over a stout wooden frame. It took 10½ yards of canvas for a boat. Mr. Tichenor made from 10 to 12 boats a year, and the demand was always greater than he could supply. He also raised St. Bernard dogs. Mr. and Mrs. Tichenor celebrated their golden wedding in 1900.

BANKS The first bank in Chelsea was established in August, 1868. This was a co-partnership between Michael J. Noyes of Chelsea and George P. Glazier of Parma, who came to Chelsea for the purpose of establishing a bank exchange. In April, 1871, Mr. Glazier purchased the interest of Mr. Noyes and operated the bank for 9 years. In January, 1880, a state bank was formed, with S. G. Ives as president and George P. Glazier, cashier. In 1902, the bank moved into the stone building at the corner of South and Main Streets, costing $60,000, built in memory of Mr. Glazier, who died in 1901.

On March 2, 1886, the burglar alarm in the George Glazier home rang. (That residence is now owned and occupied by Mr. & Mrs. W. F. Kantlehner.) Mr. Glazier had had his house and bank connected with this alarm, but on that date he was out of town. Mrs. Glazier and her sister-in-law, who were at home, decided something must be done. They got up and dressed and went down to the bank. They discovered two men in the act of robbing the bank. In some way they frightened the men, who, leaving loot and tools behind them, fled, stole a team of horses and a light wagon from a barn on the alley between Orchard and Summit Streets, and made their get-away. The team was found on the streets of Ann Arbor about ten o'clock the next morning.

CEMETERY Oak Grove Cemetery was started in 1860. To enter the cemetery, at first it was necessary to go east on Railroad Street to a drive about opposite the lane to the Henry Merkel farm. Later a right-of-way was obtained for the present road, eliminating the railroad crossings.

CHURCHES The Baptist church was organized on April 28, 1868, at the home of Dr. R. B. Gates. The first minister was Rev. H. J. Brown. A church was built a short time later at the corner of Orchard and Main Streets.

The first Catholic church in the community was built 4 miles NW of town and was surrounded by a cemetery which is still there and in which once in a great while there is a burial. In 1869 the brick church was built on Congdon Street, and the priest was Father Duhig.

The Congregational church was organized in February, 1849, and in 1851 a wooden church was built on land given for the purpose by Elisha Congdon, just to the west of the present church. The first minister was Josephus Morton.

The wife of one of the later Congregational ministers was Lettice Smith, the first white child to come to Ann Arbor. She married Rev. Thomas Holmes, and in 1856 she sailed for Europe to join her husband who had been there for a year. Mrs. Holmes remained abroad for two years studying oil painting and languages. In 1877 they came to the Chelsea Congregational church, and resided here for many years. Their home was on the corner of South Main and Summit Streets, now the site of Mrs. C. J. Lehman's home.

St. Paul's (Lutheran) church was organized on February 2, 1868. The brick church was built in the same year. Rev. J. Schladermund of Waterloo was the first minister, holding services every two weeks.

CHURCHES, cont. The Methodist church was organized in 1853 and the first services were held in the Congregational church. The first minister was Ebenezer Steele. The church building was started in 1858 and completed in 1859, on land given by Elisha Congdon This church burned on Sunday night, January 8, 1899. The present church was built and dedicated on February 25, 1900.

FAIR In 1872, the Farmers' Club started the Fairs. The first one was held that fall on land near the present athletic field. For many years the others were held on the site of the Methodist Home. These Fairs were very famous and people came long distances to attend.

MASONS The oldest secret society was Vernor Lodge I.O.O.F., founded on March 31, 1861. Olive Lodge #156 F. & A. M. was founded a short time later. It is said that some Chelsea men who were Masons rode a handcar to Dexter to attend Lodge meetings before the local lodge was started.

NEWS The first newspaper was started in 1871 by Andrew Allison, calle the Chelsea Herald. Later it was sold, in turn, to William Emmert, Thomas Holmes, and T. Mingay. Some time later the Chelsea Standard was started by O. T. Hoover, who in 1906 bought the Herald and combined the two papers.

RAILROADS In the spring of 1850, a railroad company built a combination depot and freight house on the west side of Main St. Across the track, on the site of the Chelsea elevator and west, was the railroad's wood yard, where thousands of cords of wood were stored for firing the wood-burning engines. The railroad was single-track, an old "strap" rail line. The track repairer was the station agent, and added to his other duties was the function of wood-sawyer for the road. The f irst station agent was named Finn. The first shipment of goods from this place was a barrel of eggs on May 2, 1850, and the second was 2 boxes of goods 4 days later.

At this time Manchester was an inland town and all traffic from or to that place was via Chelsea. Teamsters received 17c per barrel and on merchandize they were paid 10c per 100 pounds. As many as a dozen temsters were doing this work.

In the late 1870's Chelsea was still using the first little old railroad station, and the village's growth warranted a depot more in keeping with its advancement. No new depot seemed to materialize, so a group of young men decided to take the matter into their own hands. One dark night a cable was fastened to the depot and when the east-bound freight came in and stopped, the other end of the cable was fastened to the train. When the train started up the depot went with it, and timbers were scattered from Main Street to the cemetery. Needless to say Chelsea had its new depot, completed in 1880, and this depot is the one we are using today.

For many years the Michigan Central Railroad kept up two fine lawns between the tracks and Jackson Street, west from the depot to

East Street. In these lawns were several beautiful flower beds.

In the late 1890's, Hawk & Angus and W. A. Boland started to build electric lines or railways. The former from Detroit to Jackson, the latter from Jackson to Detroit. Mr. Boland bought up land for his right of way and the Village council gave him a franchise to lay his tracks in the center of Middle Street from Wilkinson to Madison. He built a power plant on the site of E. J. Bahnmiller's feed mill. In the summer of 1901 the tracks were laid from Jackson to the power plant in Chelsea. To beat Hawk & Angus with car service to Chelsea, Mr. Boland ran an electric car drawn by a coal-burning engine to Chelsea. All the inhabitants turned out to welcome the delegation. Mr. Boland stated that within 10 days he would have regular street-car service. This car that was drawn by an engine was the first and last car of the Boland line to run to Chelsea. After many years of idleness the tracks were torn up and the power house burned down.

Chelsea has proved to be one of the greatest shipping points for its size on the Michigan Central line. Hundreds of cars of produce, wool, live stock, and stoves have been shipped from here.

SCHOOLS A group of the alumni of the high school held a banquet and program at the McKune house following graduation exercises in June, 1893.

WAR In 1861, the growth of Chelsea was arrested when the Civil War broke out and nearly all the young men enlisted. Co. K. of the 20th Michigan was almost entirely made up of Chelsea men. The men were mustered out in 1865. Several weddings were held that year, whe the young men returned from the war and married the girls they had left behind them.

Chelsea can boast as a native daughter a woman who was a pioneer in professional life for women, Harriet Judd. She married Edward Sartin, a well-known engraver, and became Dr. Harriet Judd Sartin, of Philadelphia, one of the first woman physicians in the United States.

Chelsea, Michigan
February 27, 1945

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For information about
Washtenaw Impressions or the Washtenaw Historical Society
address the Secretary-Treasurer,
Mrs. I. Wm. Groomes, 1209 S. State, Ann Arbor, Michigan

NEW MEMBERS
Since last report

William T. Brownson, Ann Arbor
Mrs. Louise Chamberlain, Pinckney
Bernard E. Harkins, Ann Arbor
Charles King Lamb, Ypsilanti
Miss Clare M. Ledwidge, Ann Arbor
Mrs. Jennie Lohmiller, "
Atwood R. McAndrew, Ypsilanti
Mrs. DeWitt Miller, Ann Arbor
Prof. James K. Pollock, "
Mrs. Harry Skittenhelm, "
Colton Storm, "
Mrs. Florence Swenson, "
Mrs. H. B. Weadock, "

DECEASED

Emory C. Skarshaug, Sept. 23, 1952
Mrs. B. B. Cannon, Nov. 15, 1952
Mrs. Louise C. Davison, Dec. 3, 1952
Frank Hepler, Nov. 17, 1952
Miss M. L. Viroqua Lemmon, Sept. 9, 1952

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SMILES

(the sympathetic kind) gleaned from the 1881 History of Washtenaw Co.

"He lived alone three months, making cornmeal pudding his principal food, as it was better adapted to his style of cooking."

"In the near future some provision must be made to remove defenceless women from the dangerous neighborhood of that terrible scourge -- an uneducated or drunken husband."

"The Reverend closed his labors abruptly. The text of his last sermon, "Up, get ye out of this place for the Lord will destroy it," showed that he was not hopeful of good from longer staying."

"She has proved a faithful wife to him through many a weary year."

"By honesty and goaheadativeness he became the possessor of considerable property."

"He started on foot-back for Washtenaw County."

"He married A_____ B_____, but death came to her release."

"This old-fashioned inn had an eventuous career."